

Serial No. 09/965,558
Atty. Doc. No. 01P17802US

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application. The disclosure stands objected to because of informalities identified by the Examiner. Claims 1-24 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1-24 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, because the specification does not provide enablement for the process as claimed.

The undersigned attorney apologizes for the many issues created by the original application under 35 USC 112. The amendments made herein are directly responsive to each of the concerns identified by the Examiner, with the one exception of the rejection identified in paragraph 5 of the Office Communication. For that one rejection, the applicants provide arguments below for the allowance of the claims as currently amended.

The amendments contained herein include changes that resolve each of the rejections identified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Office Communication.

Each of the independent claims 1 and 12 have been amended herein to add additional process steps in order to overcome the rejection identified in paragraph 3 of the Office Communication.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of "providing a first structure that is permeable to a liquid portion of a slurry comprising a binder but that is not permeable to a solid portion of the slurry." This amendment overcomes the rejection identified in paragraph 4 of the Office Communication because the specification does provide enablement for the claimed process including such a limitation. In particular, the "first structure" of the amended claim is enabled in the specification by the combination of the permeable wall 10 and the fibrous material 12.

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The one rejection that is traversed herein by the applicants is the rejection of claims 1-24 in paragraph 5 of the Office Communication under 35 USC 112, first paragraph. The Examiner states that while being enabling for a process which removes the insulating material from the mold in which it is formed, it does not reasonably provide enablement for the process as claimed (without such a removal step).

First, the applicants note that the originally filed claims 6 and 19-23 did include such a removal step, and it is unclear why these claims were included in this rejection. The current amendments have eliminated that limitation from claim 5, however, claims 19-23 retain the limitation. Accordingly, claims 19-23 should be reconsidered without further argument.

With regard to claims 1-7, 9-18 and 24, the applicants further argue that the claimed method of making an insulating material (independent claim 1) and method of making a ceramic material (independent claim 12) can properly be considered complete once the insulating material or ceramic material is formed in its partially dried state within the mold. The removal of the material from the mold, further heating/firing, application of the material onto a substrate, and use of the material in a high temperature environment such as a combustion turbine engine are all elective steps that one may take after the completion of the claimed process making the material. Page 13, lines 23-26 of the present specification describe steps wherein the insulating material 22 is dried, heated and sintered once removed from the chamber 30, or alternatively, wherein the entire mold can be heated as an initial step to dry the material 22. Thus, the present specification does provide enablement for a process that makes a material without removing the material from the mold, and then further processes that material either within or outside the mold.

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The applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the objections and rejections and timely pass the amended application to allowance.

Please grant any extensions of time required for entering this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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